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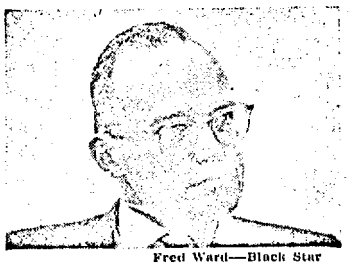

Fred Ward—Black Star

Bundy: LBJ's choice?

# U.S. Policy: Old Myths, Mixed Voices

Ever since Lyndon Johnson began showing a master's flair for domestic affairs, his critics have been waiting with some impatience—and mounting clamor—for a display of an over-all grasp of U.S. foreign policy in the mid-'60s. It came last week—but not from LBJ.

Instead, Arkansas's professorial J.W. Fulbright rose in the near-deserted Senate chamber, thrust his hands in his coat pockets, and drawled out what seemed to be a primer for the freshman President on foreign affairs. The lesson was entitled "Old Myths and New Realities." Eloquent, thoughtful, and comprehensive, it also bristled with controversy; many would differ with at least some of it. Yet it was designed to start Mr. Johnson—and America—thinking.

In 9,000 words of Fulbright scholarship, the chairman of the prestigious Foreign Relations Committee complained that much current U.S. policy was frozen in dangerously dated postures. Confused notions of morality, he insisted, were keeping America from the only viable world course: reasoned, realistic self-interest. The nation, he said, must think "some 'unthinkable thoughts'—about the cold war and East-West relations, about the underdeveloped countries, particularly in Latin America, about the changing nature of the Chinese Communist threat in Asia, about the festering war in Vietnam."

"We must learn to welcome rather than fear the voices of dissent and not to recoil in horror whenever some heretic suggests that Castro may survive or that Khrushchev is not as bad a fellow as Stalin was," he declared.

In official Washington, some of Fulbright's pronouncements (page 18) were indeed heresy. Castro? The senator tabbed him a "distasteful nuisance" but hardly "an intolerable danger." It was time to admit, said Fulbright, that the economic blockade of Cuba was hopelessly ineffectual and another invasion out of the question. Panama? The U.S. should willingly negotiate reforms in the "obsolete" canal treaty. Red China? He opposed recognition; but America should prepare for the day when "normal relations" may be possible.

**Tactics:** The 1962 Cuban missile crisis had forced the Russians to abandon recklessly aggressive tactics, said Fulbright. So long as the Soviets remained tractable, the U.S. should seek to exploit the détente, recognizing and encouraging the emerging diversity in the Communist bloc.

Predictably, Republicans cried appeasement. "The course Senator Fulbright advocates is the same road which Neville Chamberlain traveled in the 1930s," snorted the GOP national committee. "Monumentally naïve and unrealistic," pronounced Florida's Democratic Sen. George Smathers. GOP national chairman William Miller warned darkly that the Fulbright manifesto was an Administration trial balloon auguring the worst.

Fulbright stoutly insisted he had spoken "entirely" on his own—without consulting the President or the State Department. The White House fielded the speech gingerly ("very interesting," summed up a spokesman) but quickly added that Fulbright's policies on Cuba and Panama were hardly LBJ's. "I think Castro is more than a nuisance," said Secretary of State Dean Rusk. "He is a threat to this hemisphere." But he went out of his way to commend Fulbright's call for a fresh perspective in dealings with the Communist world.

Actually, much of Fulbright's thesis matched the mood of recent Administration pronouncements. The world, the President himself told a labor convention in Washington just last week, "is not the same as it was." With nuclear war unthinkable—"impossible," as he put it (not quite accurately)—"the people of this country and the world expect more from their leaders than just a show of brute force."

But striking a mood is a long way from implementing it imaginatively—or even from far-sighted coordination of the vast range of foreign-policy activity. Indeed, some critics complain that the President has no foreign policy except a native tendency to avoid trouble. "There is," grumbles one insider, "no projection

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